



Kolb/Sabino Canyon Road Connection Task Force

Meeting Summary



Tuesday, Nov. 9, 2010, 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Morris K. Udall Regional Center
7200 E. Tanque Verde Road, Tucson, AZ 85710

ATTENDEES

Task Force Members

Grant Bennett, Business Representative, Eclectic Café
Gene Brown, Neighborhood Representative, Colonia Verde
John Carlson, Sr., Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee Representative
Diana Dessy, Business Representative, Anthem Equity Group, Inc.
Art Hall, Park Representative, Pantano Ridge Estates
Kathy Hebb, Neighborhood Representative, Pantano II
Bob McDaniel, Neighborhood Representative, Dorado Country Club Estates
Laura Newsom, Neighborhood Representative, Indian Ridge Estates

City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) Staff and Consultants

Michael Graham, TDOT, Project Manager/Public Information Officer
Janice Cuaron, TDOT, Engineering Project Manager
Mary Fimbres, Ward 2 Council Office, Administrative Assistant
Kevin Thornton, Psomas, Project Manager
Alejandro Angel, Psomas, Traffic Engineering Manager
Scott Stapp, HDR Engineering, Environmental Planner
Stacey Weaks, Norris Design, Landscape Architect
Britton Dornquast, Regional Transportation Authority, MainStreet Business Assistance Program
Jan Gordley, Gordley Design Group, Public Involvement
Adriana Prieto, Gordley Design Group, Public Involvement

NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Task Force Members

Michael Tone, Regional Representative

MATERIALS PROVIDED

- Agenda
- Diagrams of intersections
 - Sabino Canyon Road and Tanque Verde Road
 - Sabino Canyon Road and Kolb Road
 - Sabino Canyon Road, Crestline Drive and Calle Malaga
- Regional Transportation Authority brochure
- Project fact sheet

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Michael Graham welcomed everyone. A quorum was established. Michael introduced Mary Fimbres, Ward 2 Council Office Administrative Assistant, and thanked her for attending. He then introduced Janice Cuaron as a new member of the project team and co-project manager. He explained that due to budget cuts and reorganization, both he and Janice would be responsible for overseeing the project. Michael will focus on the public involvement aspect of the project, and Janice will focus on the technical aspect, in addition to managing the Psomas contract.

The project team, Task Force and audience introduced themselves.

Michael reviewed the agenda items.

MEETING FORMAT

Jan Gordley explained that the Task Force meeting is subject to Open Meeting Law requirements. Due to these requirements, the meeting would be recorded and the agenda would have to be strictly adhered to. Jan further clarified that during the Call to the Audience, the team could not open into dialogue; however, she added that the project team could address individual questions and concerns after the meeting or at a later time.

APPROVAL OF MAY 25, 2010, MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Laura Newsom to approve the draft minutes of the May 25, 2010, Task Force meeting. The motion was seconded by Art Hall and approved unanimously by the Task Force with no discussion.

PROJECT STATUS AND UPDATE

Scott Stapp provided an update on the Environmental Assessment process and reports. He discussed the status of eight environmental reports or activities, including the Traffic Noise Report, Biological Review, Air Quality Report, Sole Source Aquifer coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Clean Water Act Section 404 activities, Cultural Resources Report, Hazardous Material Report, and Environmental Assessment (EA). A number of these reports have been completed and reviewed by the City of Tucson; however, only the Hazardous Material and Cultural Resources reports have been reviewed by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). ADOT will eventually review every report, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will review a few specific reports. Every report will be summarized in the EA, which will also include additional documentation of other issues.

The Biological Review has been completed and no direct impacts or threats to endangered species were found. The Air Quality Report showed air quality benefits to the Tanque Verde Road and Grant/Kolb Road intersection. The EPA has reviewed the Sole Source Aquifer report for the upper Santa Cruz and Avra Valley Basin and has concurred that there would be no negative impacts. The Clean Water Act Section 404 jurisdictional delineation document is nearly completed and will be sent to the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the coming days. The Cultural Resources Report recommends the monitoring of a couple sites during construction. The Hazardous Material Report recommends the monitoring of construction near the Tanque Verde Road and Sabino Canyon Road intersection because of former dry cleaning businesses and gas stations in the area. The draft EA is likely to be completed in early 2011. Once the draft EA has been reviewed by the various agencies, and approved for public release by FHWA, a public hearing will be held.

The public hearing is anticipated for summer 2011. During the hearing, the public will be able to provide feedback and comment on the draft EA. The City will respond to and address every question and concern stated by the public. Once the draft EA is completed, there will be a determination of finding. The finding will result in a Finding of No Significance (FONSI) or a Finding of Significant Impacts. If a FONSI occurred, federal funding could then be released; however, if there are Findings of Significant Impacts, an environmental impact statement must be submitted, requiring additional environmental work.

Based on future projections, noise walls are recommended along the Pantano II townhomes and Udall Park. Laura Newsom asked if noise walls would be provided in front of Indian Ridge Estates. Scott explained that, although the area qualified for further analysis, the results of the report showed the area did not meet the cost-effectiveness criterion. Laura stated that she would like to provide the report to the Indian Ridge Estates Homeowners' Association when it's available. She further explained that Pima County had previously committed to placing a noise wall in that location during the next road project in the area. Scott clarified that FHWA would not agree to the placement of noise walls unless it met their criteria. Since it does not meet the cost-effectiveness criterion, Pima County would have to take responsibility for the costs. The team will notify the Task Force once the report has been finalized and will post it to the project website.

Kevin Thornton provided an update on access to businesses and neighborhoods. Several members of the project team met with businesses in the Safeway business complex and discussed how access to the shopping center would be affected by the proposed project. Left turns would no longer be allowed into the shopping center from Sabino Canyon Road. The entrance on Tanque Verde Road would remain open for right and left turns. Opportunities for U-turns would be available in every direction at the Sabino Canyon Road and Tanque Verde Road intersection. Access to the Big Lots shopping center would not be altered.

Kevin moved on to explain the configuration of the Sabino Canyon Road and Tanque Verde Road intersection. Southbound Sabino Canyon Road would have dual right-turn lanes, two through lanes and dual left-turn lanes. Heading east on Tanque Verde Road would remain the same, with three through lanes and dual left-turn lanes. The new northbound Sabino Canyon Road would have two through lanes with dual left-turn lanes and a single right-turn lane. Westbound Tanque Verde Road would have a single right-turn lane, a single left-turn lane and three through traffic lanes. The single left-turn lane would be able to be expanded to a dual turn lane in the future. At the

intersection of Kolb Road and Sabino Canyon Road, there would be dual left-turn lanes heading south, a single right-turn lane heading north and a single left-turn lane from Kolb Road.

After meeting with representatives from Udall Park and Sun Tran, it was decided that the existing bus pullout at Tanque Verde Road and Sabino Canyon Road would be moved south from its current location. The new bus stop would connect to the sidewalk. The team is in the process of exploring additional bus pullouts with Sun Tran.

Construction at the intersection of Sabino Canyon Road and Tanque Verde Road is anticipated to begin in June 2011. Construction of the intersection could take six to eight months.

Alejandro Angel provided an update on traffic and traffic signals. There would be a traffic signal at Crestline Drive. At this point, it is recommended to close the frontage road in front of the Sabino Canyon Pet Resort at Crestline Drive for safety reasons, since drivers attempting to turn into the area could be blocked by traffic waiting at the signal and be rear-ended by traffic from Sabino Canyon Road. The main entrance to the pet resort is, and would remain, off of Crestline Drive. The traffic signals would be cycled at a minute and a half, and there would be video cameras for detection of traffic waiting at the signal.

There has been concern from residents about turning left from Calle Malaga onto northbound Sabino Canyon Road. Kathy Hebb expressed that the Pantano II homeowners are not pleased with having this option as the only way to access the neighborhood. She said there is a frontage road near Wrightstown and Pantano Road that residents use for right turns and asked if the team could provide a similar alternative at Calle Malaga. She said the Pantano II residents would like to further discuss the option of having a dedicated right-turn lane. The team assured her they would continue to work on an alternative with Kathy and the residents of Pantano II.

The High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK), previously mentioned in project plans, has been replaced with a full traffic signal at Crestline Drive and Sabino Canyon Road. No other HAWKS are planned for the project. Residents would use the signalized traffic light to cross the street. Michael explained that due to city budget constraints, HAWKS would only be placed at school crossings.

Currently, 42,000 cars a day travel through Speedway Boulevard near Kolb Road, 3,300 during the peak hours between 4:30 and 5 p.m. In 2030, it is projected that 52,000 vehicles would travel through this area without this project, and 52,200 with the construction of the proposed project. Left turns out of Dorado Country Club Estates are difficult for residents now, especially due to a large amount of U-turn opportunities for traffic on Speedway Boulevard. Michael agreed to look into the option of closing some of the U-turns with City of Tucson's traffic engineers.

Streetlights have been recommended for Sabino Canyon Road from Tanque Verde Road to Kolb Road. Because this could be a sensitive issue for residents, the project

team is attempting to mitigate the effects of the lights. Illumination would be provided at a low, but safety enhancing, level. The streetlights would be placed as far away from homes as possible. The poles would be 20 feet high and 170 feet apart. The light would not rise above the horizontal plain of the light fixture, for dark skies considerations.

Stacey Weaks provided an update on the proposed approach to landscape and hardscape. The goal is to provide a durable landscape that would blend into existing landscape. Multi-use paths would be provided near, and connecting to, the roadway and intersection. A substantial buffer on the west side and median of the roadway would allow for trees and vegetation. Whenever possible, water would be captured to help supplement the irrigation to the landscape. There will be low-water landscaping with the use of reclaimed water. Vegetation would include Prickly Pear, Agave, Mesquite, Palo Verde and Desert Willow. The team is exploring the options of using an aggregate hard finish, concrete or stamped concrete as the hardscape.

There would be a pedestrian path south of Crestline Drive. On the east side of the roadway, from Crestline Drive to the Pantano Wash, it would be a divided urban trail. The asphalt trail would be 12 feet wide, with a secondary decomposed granite path; both would help with connectivity between the park and the regional trail system. On the west side of the roadway, a 6-foot sidewalk would be provided. Bike lanes would be provided on the roadway.

PUBLIC HEARING UPDATE

No date has been set for the public hearing, but it is anticipated for summer 2011 once the draft EA has been completed. The team will notify the Task Force once more information is available.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND MEETING DATES

There will be two more Task Force meetings. The next will be after the first of the year. The two meetings will likely be two to three months apart and before the public hearing.

The topics of drainage, public art and the construction schedule were mentioned to include in future agendas.

CALL TO THE AUDIENCE

Three members of the audience made comments and requests regarding the environmental process, viability of businesses and opposition to the project. The project team confirmed they would stay after the meeting to address questions.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Gene Brown, seconded by Bob McDaniel and approved by the Task Force with no dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.